

OPNAV Report Symbol 5750-1
Command Serial Number: 029
Date Submitted: 10 Feb 2010

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOUO~~

Command Operations Report

1. Command Data

Name of your Command or Organization: AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING
SQUADRON 77

Unit Identification Code (UIC), per the SNDL: 55651

Name and Rank of Commander/Commanding Officer/Officer in Charge:

Last: FRITZ First: DAVID M.I.: T Rank: CDR

Date Assumed Command (date format YYYY-MM-DD): 2009-03-21

Mission/Command Employment/Area of Operations: COUNTER NARCO-
TERRORISM AND HOMELAND DEFENSE / CENTAM, SOUTHAM, CONUS

Permanent Location (Home Port for deployable units): NAS JRB NEW
ORLEANS

Immediate Superior In Command:

Operational: COMUSNAVSOUTH

Administrative: TACTICAL SUPPORT WING

Identify your assigned Task Force/Group/Unit name(s) and
mission(s). Include OPLAN(s) and or named operations you
participated in during Task Force assignment (if applicable):
JOINT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE SOUTH, OPERATION CARIB SHIELD,
OPERATION CAPER FOCUS

Name(s) of Forces, Commands, Ships, Squadrons or Units assigned
or under your operational control (if applicable): N/A

Type and number of Aircraft Assigned and Tail Codes, if
applicable: 6 E-2C, AF600-605

Commands, Detachments or Units deployed on board or stationed

aboard as tenant activities (as applicable): N/A

Number of Personnel Assigned:

Officers: 57 Enlisted: 48 Civilian: 58 (Northrop-Grumman)

Command Point of Contact (required entry, complete in full):

Name (Rank, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name): LT
Patrick G. Lambert

Job Title/Office Code: Public Affairs Officer

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Command Mailing Address: 400 Russell Ave, Hangar 4, New
Orleans, LA 70143

2. Commander's Assessment

Airborne Early Warning Squadron SEVEN SEVEN (VAW-77) was established in October, 1995 as one of two Navy Reserve Hawkeye Squadrons. It remains our nation's only reserve E-2C squadron since the 2005 decommission of its sister reserve unit, VAW-78. Nicknamed the "Night Wolves", VAW-77 is one of six squadrons assigned to the Navy Reserve's Tactical Support Wing (TSW). The primary role of the squadron is to support two major missions. The first is to provide Airborne Command, Control and Coordination (ABC3) of our nation's Counter-illicit Trafficking (CIT) forces in the global war on illegal drugs and terrorism. The second is to provide Homeland Defense support. VAW-77 proved again in 2009 that it can be highly successful in supporting both of these important missions.

In support of CIT operations, the Night Wolves spent 183 days deployed to El Salvador and Puerto Rico. Additionally, the Night Wolves executed numerous high-visibility exercises INCONUS with flawless precision. During 2009, two squadron personnel were also assigned as Individual Augmentees to Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, serving in Afghanistan, and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM serving in Iraq.

VAW-77 also aggressively sought to improve E-2C employment methods, pioneering tactics that revolutionized CIT and E-2C expeditionary operations. As the leading experts in E-2C expeditionary operations, the Night Wolves significantly expanded CIT coverage in the SOUTHCOM AOR by simultaneously operating from the primary detachment site as well as tactically positioned secondary sites such as Guantanamo Bay, Barbados, and Costa Rica. VAW-77 also became the first operational U.S. Navy squadron to successfully complete CIT missions with an unmanned aerial

vehicle (UAV), directing an Israeli Heron in a joint/combined operation in the Eastern Pacific.

VAW-77's contributions to CIT Operations were immediate and measurable. During 2009, VAW-77 directly contributed to the seizure and disruption of more than 19 metric tons of illicit narcotics with a street value of over 1.9 billion dollars, the arrest of 23 suspected Narco-terrorists and the rescue of nine personnel stranded at sea.

Key contributors to the squadron's success for the year were adequate funding and aircraft availability. The extremely talented Northrop Grumman contract maintenance team consistently provided mission capable aircraft during every detachment, resulting in a sortie completion rate in excess of 98 percent.

3. Chronology and Narrative

Chronology:

- a. JAN09 - MAR09 Counter-Illicit Trafficking detachment, CGAS Borinquen, Puerto Rico.
- b. APR09 - JUN09 Counter-Illicit Trafficking detachment, CSL Comalapa, El Salvador.
- c. JUL09 - AUG09 Counter-Illicit Trafficking detachment, CGAS Borinquen, Puerto Rico.
- d. SEP09 HARMEX, NAS MT Mugu, CA
- e. OCT09 - NOV09 Counter-Illicit Trafficking detachment, CSL Comalapa, El Salvador.

Narrative:

The Night Wolves continued their impeccable safety record in 2009, flying 901 sorties, 487 of which were on deployment, accumulating nearly 2600 flight hours, and amassing nearly 22,000 maintenance man-hours with zero ground mishaps.

Detachment 09-2 - During this extended 49 day detachment VAW-77 tracked a multitude of air and surface suspects of interest directly influencing the seizure, disruption, and prosecution of illicit drugs. Our command safely flew 507.9 hours of CN support averaging 10.4 hours and 2.4 sorties per day while recording a 97 percent sortie completion rate. This amazing effort by the Northrop Grumman maintenance team, aircrew, and Full Time Support ground personnel contributed significantly to joint military operations within the AOR. While VAW-77 was highly successful in detecting and monitoring targets of interest, the lack of readily available end-game assets severely hampered the interdiction of narcotics and narco-terrorists.

Detachment 09-3 - During 47 days of direct COCOM/JCS CIT support our command provided 548.1 flight hours and 123 sorties in support of OPERATION CAPER FOCUS. While deployed, the command exercised two forward deployments to Liberia, Costa Rica and one forward deployment to Guantanamo Bay Cuba in support of OPERATION RIPTIDE. These operations resulted in: a 2.0 metric ton Go-Fast drug disruption totaling 200 million dollars in illicit drugs; a 5.8 metric ton Self-propelled Semi-submersible (SPSS) disruption totaling 570 million dollars in illicit drugs, 100 thousand dollars in contraband, and arrest of four narco-terrorists; the utilization of prosecution evidence in support of a Dept. of Justice Semi-Submersible scuttling case; the seizure of one Go-Fast smuggling speed boat; one actual search-and-rescue mission resulting in the rescue of five civilians stranded at sea; the localization, tracking, and targeting of 40 suspect contacts of interest for JIATFS; and finally participation in 100 hours of flight test and employment of HERON UAV CIT operations.

Detachment 09-4 - During 47 days of direct COCOM/JCS CIT support our command provided 490.1 flight hours and 119 sorties in support of OPERATION CARIB SHIELD. While deployed, the command exercised two forward deployments to Barbados in support of OPERATION FLYING FISH, three forward deployments to Key West in support of OPERATION THUNDERBALL, and one forward hurricane evacuation to CSL Curacao. These operations resulted in the disruption of 500 pounds lbs of cocaine, the capture of four narco-terrorists, and provided command and operational control to the U.S. Navy's Stiletto Littoral Combat Ship development program.

Detachment 10-1 - During 40 days of direct COCOM/JCS CIT support our command provided 408.8 flight hours and 100 sorties in support of Operations CAPER FOCUS, AZTEC EAGLE and MAYAN JAGUAR. These operations resulted in: a 0.5 metric ton disruption totaling 50 million dollars in illicit narcotics; a 7.0 metric ton Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible disruption totaling 700 million dollars in illicit drugs and the arrest of four suspected narco-terrorists; and the localization, tracking and targeting of 26 targets of interest for Joint Interagency Task Force - South (JIATF-S).

HARMEX - The HARM shoot was a rousing success from a logistics perspective. The squadron successfully deployed two aircraft and ten aircrew to NAS Point Mugu, CA without incident. VAW-77 provided consistent range clearance support for the duration of the exercise, resulting in all six missiles being successfully expended.

The squadron's complement of awards includes a Joint Meritorious

Unit award, two Navy Meritorious Unit Commendations, Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation, two Battle "E" awards, six Safety "S" awards, and three Noel Davis trophies.

4. Supporting Reports

- a. Detachment 09-2 End of Action Report
- b. Detachment 09-3 End of Action Report
- c. Detachment 09-4 End of Action Report
- d. Detachment 10-1 End of Action Report
- e. HARMEX End of Action Report

5. Published Documents

- a. None.

6. Photographs

D. T. FRITZ